

## **Compensated Work Therapy) /Transitional Residence (CWT/TR) Program**

The Compensated Work Therapy / Transitional Residence (CWT/TR) Program is based on the premise that many veterans with severe substance abuse disorders and/or serious mental illnesses need extended residential treatment, but that such treatment should require responsible community-oriented behavior, such as working at a job and paying rent, in addition to maintaining sobriety and participating in treatment. To support this program special authority was obtained through Public Laws 102-54 and 105-114 for VA to purchase, lease or use underutilized space on VA medical center grounds. The legislation also authorized VA to charge veterans rent to live in these residences. Money for rent is derived from earnings obtained by working in VA's Compensated Work Therapy (CWT) Program. CWT is a therapeutic work-for-pay program in which private businesses or federal agencies contract with VA for work to be performed by veterans. The central goals of the CWT/TR Program are to help veterans who suffer from severe substance abuse disorders, psychiatric problems, homelessness and/or vocational deficits to: 1) remain sober and/or improve their mental health status, 2) obtain and sustain employment and stable housing in the community, 3) manage their lives in an independent and productive manner, and 4) minimize their reliance on institutional care. Basic psychosocial rehabilitation services provided by the program include:

- 1) A therapeutic residential treatment setting in which veterans are provided an opportunity to re-learn, or to practice independent living skills under the supervision of house managers and clinicians.
- 2) A supportive work setting that encourages and develops behaviors that are conducive to achieving and maintaining competitive employment.
- 3) Long-term sobriety maintenance and mental health aftercare treatment that provide the veteran with the continuing professional support needed to maintain sobriety and reinforce the psychiatric recovery process.

Since its inception in 1990, the CWT/TR program has been evaluated and monitored by VA's Northeast Program Evaluation Center (NEPEC) in West Haven, Connecticut. The goals of the evaluation are to assess whether the program: 1) has been implemented as planned; 2) is reaching the intended target populations, and; 3) is effective in improving veteran health status, employment performance, income, residential status, social functioning and reducing the use of VA inpatient care.

### **NEPEC Contacts:**

Catherine Leda Seibyl MSN MPH, Associate Director, NEPEC  
203-932-5711 x3722

[Cathy.seibyl@med.va.gov](mailto:Cathy.seibyl@med.va.gov)

Robert Rosenheck MD, National Director, NEPEC  
203-932-5711 x3850

[Robert.rosenheck@med.va.gov](mailto:Robert.rosenheck@med.va.gov)

Debbie Sieffert, Program Analyst  
203-932-5711 x3616

[Debbie.Sieffert@med.va.gov](mailto:Debbie.Sieffert@med.va.gov)